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speculation. At any rate, the acceptance of this principle will put the emphasis where Jesus put it. We shall cease to ask of a man "What is he willing to subscribe to?" and begin to ask, "What sort of life does he live?"

PAUL THE DEAF

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It would be impossible to say how many different theories have been formed to account for Paul's "thorn in the flesh." The accompanying theory is certainly worth placing in comparison with the others which have been suggested. Its conclusions are obviously presented tentatively, however. Whether or not the hypothesis gains our readers' assent, the article itself will serve to make the figure of the apostle more vivid.

In his *Saint Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen* Sir William Ramsay makes an interesting remark which has hitherto escaped comment. He argues that the Athenians must have been "strongly moved," and therefore hostile to Paul because they "took hold of" him to bring him to the Areopagus. This incident lends itself to an entirely different interpretation. I believe that we have here the first of several touches in Luke's narrative which betray, perhaps unintentionally, the fact that the apostle's hearing had become impaired through the hardships of his career. Now, if this were true, it would throw light upon a very important scene in that career: his trial at Jerusalem. I shall try to show that the evidence for the theory, if not more conclusive than that advanced for other theories, is at any rate strongly presumptive.

In the first place, when Paul was making his great speech before King

Agrippa under circumstances of great pomp, and was eager for every reason to create a favorable impression, Festus interrupted him in "a loud voice." As governor, he sat, not at some distance, but close to the king, and facing Paul. Why then did he speak in a loud voice, and why—which is equally important for our understanding of the incident—did Paul remember it of him, as we know that he did from the fact that the detail has been preserved? The first and most natural inference is that Festus did so to make Paul hear, and that inference would have been drawn long before this had not the words of Festus diverted attention from what was more significant. Festus' opinion is of no importance to history; the world knows that Paul was not mad; the essential point is that Festus spoke to him in a loud voice.

Again, Paul, suffering from the violence of the mob at the temple, had

been rushed up the stairs to the castle by the soldiers who had just rescued him. Lysias, the captain, who seems not to have understood much Hebrew, to get to the bottom of his story, ordered him tortured. It is a singular fact that Paul waited until he was being bound, and the captain had left the room before he asserted his rights as a Roman citizen. The time to protest was when he heard the order given. Suppose, however, that he did not hear? Then he would not have known until the last moment what to expect, and his behavior would have been natural. Certainly he was not acting for effect, like the hero of a moving-picture play, nor unwilling to answer questions, for when the captain had asked him a question, standing close beside him in the midst of the noise and confusion, he had answered immediately.

We possess, not merely the substance, but the text of Claudias Lysias' letter to Felix, and we owe it to some accidental circumstance. Either he himself showed it to someone, or Felix did. Lysias had more interest in doing so than Felix. He was "afraid" of a reprimand, if nothing more, for having acted too hastily. There is a strong hint here of some difficulty or misunderstanding. He had now learned that this enigmatical Jew with the intent look and eager, gesticulating hand was not a nobody, but had respectable kindred in Jerusalem, and he was accordingly so desirous of setting himself right with both him and Felix that he was giving Paul an escort of four hundred and seventy men. Did he therefore, to reassure him, let him see the letter (which rather stretched the truth about the protection he had

given him, as Paul alone knew), instead of trying to explain to him by word of mouth what he was going to do with him? If not, how is it that we know the wording of the letter? Were Roman captains in the habit of showing their letters to the men they had under guard?

It "seemed good" to Paul to be left behind "at Athens alone," but it never seemed good to him to be left alone anywhere again. After that bitter experience you will find him in the company of his friends, or worrying because they have not come. Yet Paul had no more cause for spiritual loneliness than many a modern missionary. He was brought up in a heathen city, he never went from a Christian to a pagan land as men do now. If his health was frail, so was Livingstone's. The sense of isolation had a physical cause. When Paul went to Athens he had not yet learned to acknowledge the extent of his dependence upon others. He persisted in remaining there alone, and his self-confidence met with a blow. Though he could reason with one at a time so long as the other had patience with this "seed pecker," and caught epithets not meant for his ear, when a group surrounded him he was at a loss, so that they had to take hold of him uncereemoniously to make him understand what they wanted of him. They were disrespectful rather than hostile; but Paul was always sensitive about his personal dignity. It was some time before he had an opportunity to mention the incident; that he did so after that length of time shows that it rankled. I place here, between Athens and Corinth, one of the three crises in his life when he prayed that his Satanic hindrance might be

removed. He went to the Corinthians in fear and trembling. He was "determined not to know anything but Jesus Christ and him crucified." More than two years afterward he wrote to them that he was a missionary to them, at least, if not to some other people; and added, in a phrase which had for him a personal meaning: "If I know not the meaning of the voice I shall be to him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian to me." We can trace this profound and painful note all through the first letter to the Corinthians. It required a slighting remark, however, to the effect that, although his speech was contemptible, he could lay it on hard enough in his letters, to make him once for all put aside his reserve. That remark implied that he was taking an unfair advantage of his infirmity, and he could not allow it to pass. He will not take back a word that he has written; if he were there in person he would lay it on just as hard; if he comes again he will not spare. Let them mend their ways. This is a delightfully human touch. We note that they obeyed.

Equally human is his coupling his infirmity with his revelation. It was a revelation to the *ear*. The little missionary who snapped his fingers at caste by doing manual labor in the work-room with slaves had had a great experience. He had "heard unspeakable words which it was not lawful for a man to utter." His disability had not happened to him, it had been sent by Satan to buffet him and keep down his pride after that revelation. The Corinthians knew all about the infirmity; it was the first thing they noticed in him, not a

mysterious malady which they now heard of for the first time. What they could not perceive was the way in which it had disciplined his inner life. So for once, in the reaction after his great danger at Ephesus, he unveils his soul as no Anglo-Saxon would do, and lets them see him in all his weakness. He even admits that he had felt lost without Titus. With a debonair wave of the hand he adds that he is glad that they are "strong" though he is "weak." So once, in the harbor of Samoa in a hurricane, the men on board a sinking ship cheered and their band played the national air of that other ship which was struggling out to safety in the open sea.

These unexpected flashes of temperament in a many-sided man dazzle one like the light playing on the facets of a gem. Indeed, Paul shows at times something of St. Francis' Gallic gayety of heart, something gallant, something humorous, something irritable ("I don't thrash the air when I fight"; "Put a little salt into your remarks"; "Long talkee, endless genealogies, old women's yarns . . . *dodge* them!").

I agree with Sir William Ramsay that sickness in Galatia was the starting-point of Paul's ills, and that it left his constitution susceptible for the rest of his life. It is possible that the original illness was of a malarial character, though there is no proof of this; but if a modern missionary were to write home to his board, saying, "I die daily," while contemporary letters proved that he was able to earn his living by a trade, and preach besides, we should find the phrase exaggerated and repellent, or we should infer that something was left

untold. A man who had been shipwrecked three times, who had spent a day and night in the deep, been beaten eight times, stoned, and imprisoned, had no need to exaggerate. "Daily" martyrdom meant a daily handicap, not attacks of any kind of sickness. Paul got up before daybreak to make tents, hence his eyesight was good enough for practical purposes. A very moderate degree of deafness would have been enough to justify his vehement complaint that Satan himself was trying to hinder him. It would not only have obliged him to have some self-effacing friend always at hand, as we now perceive to have been his habit, but it would have made it necessary for him to overcome prejudice before he could influence his hearers. The fact is that he never did overcome it in many instances. The antagonism he aroused was not entirely due to his doctrine, it must often have been personal. There are phrases in his letters of the most extraordinary intensity which reveal the physical basis for part of his mental suffering: pressure; hemmed in; perplexed, yet not without aid; insolent reproaches; made a spectacle of; treated like dirt to be wiped off; to "open a door of speech" ("for there are many adversaries," he adds, with jaw set); to be "branded" with the stigmata of Christ.

It is nowhere stated in Acts that the church at Antioch ever commissioned Paul for a second missionary journey. In all probability the church did not consider him physically able to "hold down the job," as we say. It was Paul who suggested the trip to Barnabas, and we are at liberty to conjecture that Barnabas was to have financed it if

they had not quarreled over the inclusion of John Mark in the party. Altogether too much has been made by commentators of this quarrel. It was very natural under the circumstances, and throws light on Paul. There is no question which of the two, Mark or Luke, would have been the more sympathetic companion to a partly disabled man. Mark, who alone caught up and recorded the story of the deaf man with an impediment in his speech, may have done so because to his practical mind such an affliction was the most pitiable of human ills. Or was it that that incident returned to his memory long afterward, when he had learned to know Paul? That they were able to get on well together in after-days speaks well for them both. Still, a man physically disqualified in some way, who must take his own course and choose his own company, ought to be financially independent. One sees now why Paul was determined to earn his bread with his hands, and why he took pardonable pride in being able to say that he labored more than they all. There was once a home missionary who was thought too old to retain his post. He therefore asked the board to send him to a harder field where younger men had declined to go. They made him superintendent of four frontier states, and he rode hundreds of miles in the saddle, traveling like Paul "in perils of rivers, in perils of cold, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils of the wilderness, in weariness and painfulness."

If this theory of Paul's thorn in the flesh is true, two things must be proved: first, that his personality was so remarkable that it could conquer all obstacles

on occasion; secondly, that it could do so only through and by the aid of others. The first proposition is universally admitted. "What carefulness your repentance wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal," he wrote to the Corinthians who had grumbled against him. The Galatians received him like a guest from heaven, the Philippians made up a purse for him out of their deep poverty, the elders at Ephesus "wept sore" because they were to see his face no more. Priscilla and Aquila risked their necks for him, Onesiphorus hunted him up in Rome, and was not ashamed of his chains. No man ever had more enthusiastic helpers, nor was more scrupulously careful to have them honorably remembered by name. We live in an age which applauds the achievements of Helen Keller, and forgets the name of her teacher. But for the genius of Anne Sullivan the world had never heard of Helen Keller. Paul gave honor where honor was due. Apollos was too well-bred to "butt in" on one occasion; Paul makes a note of it. "If anyone asks about Titus, he is my partner." Timothy is to be treated with respect, though he is young, Tychicus is his "faithful minister in the Lord," Epaphroditus, his "brother and companion in labor, and fellow-soldier." He sends his remembrances to Mary, who worked so hard for them. Luke, the "beloved physician," is with him.

The converse proposition must be squarely stated, for it has never been sufficiently emphasized. It is that Paul, apart from his helpers, was a comparatively ineffective figure. He not only

won scant recognition at Athens, he could not even protect his own dignity. The Athenians "mocked" him. Though there were other Christians at Troas, he had to have someone he was used to, to feel at ease. From their point of view his friends were perfectly right in trying to keep him out of the riot at Ephesus. He held the mob quiet for a few minutes at Jerusalem, but could not control it eventually, nor any other mob. Every time he tried to handle an angry crowd he failed. At Lystra they stoned him, at Philippi they imprisoned him, at Jerusalem they beat him. Such was the callous pagan temper of the time, and such the harsh self-righteousness of the Jew, visiting infirmities upon the sufferer. It is necessary to lay aside the modern humanitarian attitude and think one's self back into the spirit of that age before one can comprehend how Paul appeared in the eyes of the majority of his fellow-men. Why is it that we have such a clear, businesslike report of the hearing before Felix, to which Philip and Luke could easily have gained admission—the speeches being given on both sides—and such a confused, fragmentary, and altogether unsatisfactory account of the trial at Jerusalem, from which outsiders were excluded? The reason is plain: the chief actor in that scene, thus isolated from his devoted attendants, was unable to follow the disorderly proceedings well enough to report them consecutively. To think of him as adroitly conducting his own case like a criminal lawyer, or stooping to legal quibbles to gain a point for himself is to misunderstand the whole drama. If anything stands out clearly in the account it is that Paul was not master of

the situation. He "cried out," standing up. He tells Felix afterward that he had cried out. He tried in vain to get the attention of the assembly; there was noise, dissension, open hostility. His enemies had him at a terrible disadvantage, and they used it. At the very opening of his defense, the blow on the mouth from those beside him took him completely by surprise. He saw the priest speak, but had no idea what was coming. He schooled himself to apologize as one humbly conscious of making mistakes, but his spirit was white-hot. We like him the better for his wrath, they hated him for his unconquerable spirit. It was not becoming in an apostate Jew, whom Jehovah had cursed by infirmity. It is not even clear whether they listened to the rest of his defense, or whether they suffered him to proceed at all. They wrangled among themselves. Anyone could see that, even if he could not hear all. With "beasts" Paul fought at Ephesus. At Jerusalem also they were wild beasts, no less.

We of today would be the gainers by it if we could rub out the figure of "St. Paul," the famous theologian, which has obscured the real man like whitewash over some old fresco, and would try instead to see him as he was in the flesh: magnificently able, and loyal to the core, but both dominating and dependent, and requiring much of others; of a sensitive ego; knowing himself; a one-idealed man, a provocative personality, a center of disturbance wherever he went; passionately loved, when not ignored altogether, or treated like the offscouring of all things; with narrow views of women, as if, unlike

Christ, he had never talked freely with a woman; reacted upon in other ways by physical conditions, yet marvelously escaping from them, made more keen of vision, more nobly self-assertive; turning his thoughts over in his own mind with joy in the exercise, as a man plays solitaire with himself, yet in trying to work out a logical system, least convincing when most ingenious; and in his great moments, of which he had more than most, breaking through all that, forgetting far-fetched conceits about Hagars and Sarahs and covenants, and exclaiming in a burst of inspiration: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Compare him with Treitschke. Both were thrown in upon themselves by circumstances, but to what different conclusions! Treitschke's mental processes were colored by his deafness. His conception of the Juggernaut state, making itself great by "dispassionate murder," has a dark grandeur, but it could not free his own soul. He remains for us always the Herr Professor, the indoor man. As the poor writer's favorite word is "virile," so the defective worships "strength." Feebleness is the sin against the Holy Ghost, taught Treitschke; but Paul could affirm from his own experience that God chooses the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. The man of the lecture-room, cut off from a soldier's career, glories in war, and declares that God will see to it that it shall always recur

as a drastic medicine for the human race; the man of action, who has run the gamut of heroic experience, affirms that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and

having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace . . . be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

Thus the two. The thoughts their brains distilled are active unto this day, those of one, the poison for a people, those of the other, a tonic for the world.

THE FAITH OF A MIDDLE-AGED MAN

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Chapter IV. The Life as a Witness to the Truth

In the reminiscences of her girlhood, given in the autobiography of Frances Power Cobbe, is the following pathetic passage:

Then ensued four years on which I look back as pitiful in the extreme. In complete mental solitude and great ignorance I found myself facing all the dread problems of human existence. For a long time my intense desire to remain a Christian predominated, and brought me back from each return to scepticism in a passion of repentance and prayer to Christ to take my life or my reason sooner than allow me to stray from the fold. In those days no such thing was heard of as "broad" interpretations of Scripture doctrines. To be a Christian then was to believe implicitly in the verbal inspiration of every word of the Bible, and to adore Christ as "very God of very God." Had anything like modern theories . . . been known to me at this crisis of my life, it is possible that the whole course of my spiritual history

would have been different. But Evangelical Christianity in 1840 presented itself as a thing to be taken whole or rejected wholly.

As time went on, I saw all that had made to me the supreme glory and joy of life fade out of it. In the summer after my twentieth birthday, I had reached the end of the long struggle. It left me with something as nearly like a *tabula rasa* of faith as can well be imagined. I definitely disbelieved in human immortality and in a supernatural revelation.

It is impossible to read such a passage without sadness and deep sympathy—sympathy for the young girl striving to be honest above all, even at the cost of that which made life sweet, and sadness that her experience should be typical of that of tens of thousands of the noblest spirits, from her day till now. You may meet women of middle age today in almost any cultured circle, who, if they chose to speak on a buried chapter in